

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) A process for selectively removing caffeine from a solid caffeine-containing catechin composition, which comprises dissolving said solid caffeine-containing catechin composition in a mixed solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 8/2 to 6/4 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the mixed solution, bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon and also acid clay or activated clay, allowing the activated carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove the caffeine, and removing a precipitate of insoluble components, said activated carbon, and said acid clay or activated clay by filtration, ~~and allowing said activate carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine.~~

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a green tea extract, which comprises dissolving a solid caffeine-containing catechin composition in a mixed solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 8/2 to 6/4 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the mixed solution, bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon and also acid clay or activated clay,

allowing the activated carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove the caffeine,
and

removing a precipitate of insoluble components, said activated carbon, and said acid clay or activated clay by filtration, and

~~allowing said activate carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine.~~

5. (Currently Amended) The process according to ~~any one of claims 1-4~~ claim 2,
wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a tea extract, a concentrate of a tea extract, or a purified product of a concentrate of a tea extract.

6. (Currently Amended) The process according to ~~any one of claims 1-4~~ claim 2,
wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition comprises from 25 to 90 wt% of non-polymer catechins in terms of solid content.

7. (Currently Amended) A process for selectively removing caffeine from a caffeine-containing catechin composition comprising

adding a solid concentrate of a tea extract, said solid concentrate comprising from 25 to 40 wt% of non-polymer catechins, to a solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 10/0 to 8/2 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the solution,

adding water to the resultant mixture to adjust a weight ratio of ethanol to water to from 9/1 to 5/5,

removing undissolved solids,

distilling off said solvent to produce a solid caffeine-containing composition,

dissolving said solid caffeine-containing catechin composition in a mixed solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 8/2 to 6/4 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the mixed solution,

bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon,

allowing said activated carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine, and

removing a precipitate of insoluble components and said activated carbon by filtration,~~and~~

~~allowing said activate carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine.~~

8. (Currently Amended) A process for selectively removing caffeine from a caffeine-containing catechin composition comprising

adding a solid concentrate of a tea extract, said solid concentrate comprising from 25 to 40 wt% of non-polymer catechins, to a solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 10/0 to 8/2 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the solution,

adding water to the resultant mixture to adjust a weight ratio of ethanol to water to a range of from 9/1 to 5/5,

removing solids from the resultant suspension,

distilling off said solvent from a remaining liquid phase to produce a solid caffeine-containing composition,

dissolving said solid caffeine-containing catechin composition in a mixed solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 8/2 to 6/4 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the mixed solution,

bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon,

allowing said activated carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine, and
removing a precipitate of insoluble components and said activated carbon by
filtration,and

~~allowing said activate carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine.~~

9. (Currently Amended) A process for selectively removing caffeine from a caffeine-containing catechin composition comprising

dissolving a solid concentrate of a tea extract, said solid concentrate comprising from 25 to 40 wt% of non-polymer catechins, in a mixed solvent of water and ethanol,

adding ethanol to the resultant solution to adjust a weight ratio of ethanol to water to a range of from 9/1 to 5/5 such that a precipitate is caused to occur, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the solution,

removing solids from the resultant suspension,

distilling off said organic solvents from a remaining liquid phase to produce a solid caffeine-containing composition,

dissolving said solid caffeine-containing catechin composition in a mixed solution comprising ethanol and water in a ratio ranging from 8/2 to 6/4 by weight, wherein said ratio is the ratio of ethanol to water in the mixed solution,

bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon,

allowing said activated carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine, and

removing a precipitate of insoluble components and said activated carbon by
filtration,and

~~allowing said activate carbon to absorb caffeine to selectively remove caffeine.~~

10. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim [[3 or]] 4, wherein a weight ratio of non-polymer catechins to caffeine in the resultant green tea extract is from 7 to 60.

11. (Withdrawn) A caffeine-containing tea extract, wherein:

- (a) a content of gallates in non-polymer catechins is from 45 to 60 wt%,
- (b) a weight ratio of said non-polymer catechins to caffeine is from 8 to 40,
- (c) a weight ratio of said non-polymer catechins to (sucrose + glucose) is from 2 to 15, and
- (d) dietary fibers amount to 0.5 wt% or less of a solid content.

12. (Withdrawn) A packaged beverage comprising a green tea extract obtained by a process as defined in claim 3 or 4.

13. (Withdrawn) The packaged beverage according to claim 12, wherein said packaged beverage comprises from 0.092 to 0.5 wt% of non-polymer catechins, and a weight ratio of said non-polymer catechins to caffeine is from 7 to 60.

14. (Withdrawn) The packaged beverage according to claim 12, wherein:
said packaged beverage comprises from 0.092 to 0.5 wt% of non-polymer catechins,

- (a) a content of gallates in said non-polymer catechins is from 45 to 60 wt%,
- (b) a weight ratio of said non-polymer catechins to caffeine is from 8 to 40,
- (c) a weight ratio of said non-polymer catechins to (sucrose + glucose) is from 2 to 15, and
- (d) dietary fibers amount to 0.5 wt% or less of a solid content.

15. (Previously Presented) A process for purifying a solid concentrate of a tea extract, said solid concentrate comprising from 25 to 40 wt% of non-polymer catechins, which comprises adding said solid concentrate to a 10/0 to 8/2 by weight of ethanol and water, adding water to the resultant mixture to adjust a weight ratio of ethanol to water to from 9/1 to 5/5, removing undissolved solids, and then, distilling off said solvent.

16. (Previously Presented) A process for purifying a solid concentrate of a tea extract, said solid concentrate comprising from 25 to 40 wt.% of non-polymer catechins, which comprises adding said solid concentrate to a 10/0 to 8/2 by weight of ethanol and water, adding water to the resultant mixture to adjust a weight ratio of ethanol to water to a range of from 9/1 to 5/5, removing solids from the resultant suspension, and then, distilling off said solvent from a remaining liquid phase.

17. (Previously Presented) A process for purifying a solid concentrate of a tea extract, said solid concentrate comprising from 25 to 40 wt% of non-polymer catechins, which comprises dissolving said solid concentrate in a mixed solvent of water and ethanol, adding ethanol to the resultant solution to adjust a weight ratio of ethanol to water to a range of from 9/1 to 5/5 such that a precipitate is formed, separating solids from the resultant suspension, and then, distilling off said organic solvents from a remaining liquid phase.

18. (Original) The purification process according to any one of claims 15-17, wherein a content weight ratio [(B)/(A)] of (B) oxalic acid to (A) non-polymer catechins in said concentrate of said tea extract after said purification is from 0.002 to 0.035.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Withdrawn) A green tea extract wherein a content weight ratio [(A)/(B)] of (A) non-polymer catechins to (B) total polyphenols is from 0.83 to 0.96.

21. (Withdrawn) A packaged beverage comprising:
a green tea extract as defined in claim 20,
wherein a concentration of non-polymer catechins in said beverage is from 0.092 to 0.5 wt%.

22. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 7, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a green tea extract.

23. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 7, wherein said bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon further comprises bringing the resultant solution into contact with acid clay or activated clay and wherein said removing a precipitate of insoluble components and said activated carbon by filtration further comprises removing said acid clay or activated clay by filtration.

24. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 23, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a green tea extract.

25. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 8, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a green tea extract.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 8, wherein said bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon further comprises bringing the resultant solution into contact with acid clay or activated clay and wherein said removing a precipitate of insoluble components and said activated carbon by filtration further comprises removing said acid clay or activated clay by filtration.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 26, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a green tea extract.

28. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 9, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a green tea extract.

29. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 9, wherein said bringing the resultant solution into contact with activated carbon further comprises bringing the resultant solution into contact with acid clay or activated clay and wherein said removing a precipitate of insoluble components and said activated carbon by filtration further comprises removing said acid clay or activated clay by filtration.

30. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 29, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a green tea extract.

31. (New) The process according to claim 4, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition is a tea extract, a concentrate of a tea extract, or a purified product of a concentrate of a tea extract.

32. (New) The process according to claim 4, wherein said caffeine-containing catechin composition comprises from 25 to 90 wt% of non-polymer catechins in terms of solid content.